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POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION, *its CHIEF PRINCIPLES and their RESULTS in ENGLAND and IRELAND as COMPARED with SCOTLAND.* By EDWIN CHADWICK, C.B.

[Read before Section B of the Social Science Congress, at Edinburgh, 1863.]

I HAVE to submit to the consideration of the Section the different leading principles of the legal provisions for the relief of the destitute in England, Ireland, and Scotland, and of the results of their conformity or divergence from what my colleagues of the Poor Law Commission of Inquiry agreed, upon the evidence, were the sound principles of legislation for such provisions.

*Principles of a Compulsory Poor Law.*

At the time of the appointment of the Poor Law Commission of Inquiry in 1833, there was prevalent the theory of population by Mr. Malthus, sustained by abstract and geometrical reasoning, which attributed the existence and increase of pauperism mainly to the inevitable pressure of population on the means of subsistence, and prescribed, as the necessary remedy, the absolute repeal and disallowance of any legal provision of relief. Eminent economists and statesmen, and, indeed, most persons of intellectual rank in society, adopted this opinion as a settled conclusion, and were of opinion that all measures for the amendment of the Poor Law in England, ought to tend to its discontinuance. The evidence elicited by my own examinations, conducted, as I trust, impartially, as to any preconceived opinions, appeared to me to negative this conclusion. Everywhere the increase of pauperism and of burthens on the rates appeared to be due to the mal-administration of the legal provisions for compulsory relief, to the imbecility, or to the sinister interests of ignorant local administrators, and to habits of the recipients of the rates induced by lax administration—nowhere to the assumed inevitable pressure of a willing working population upon limited means of subsistence. My colleagues, some of them of strong preconceived opinions, yielded to this, and to concurrent testimony of other investigators to the like effect. They agreed, nevertheless, that in all extensive communities, such as ours, circumstances will occur in which an individual, by the failure of his ordinary means of subsistence, will be exposed to the danger of perishing; that to refuse relief, and, at the same time, to punish mendicity, when it cannot be proved that the mendicant could have obtained subsistence by labour, is

repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind ; that it is repugnant to them to punish even depredation apparently committed as the only resource against want. But, whilst we adopted as a settled principle that a legal provision of compulsory relief should be made to the able-bodied, we did not propose that it should be extended to more than the relief of *indigence*—the state of a person unable to labour, or unable to obtain, in return for his labour, the means of subsistence. We did not propose to extend the provision to the relief of *poverty*—that is, the state of one who, in order to obtain a mere subsistence, is forced to have recourse to labour, nor did we propose any legal relief for poverty, strictly so called, and we thought it would be extremely mischievous if we did. We did not consider that a compulsory system of relief by the nation was available as a direct means, as some theoretical writers have assumed, of elevating the condition of the nation. But the evidence collected appeared to establish as a conclusion that a compulsory provision for the relief of the indigent can generally be administered on a sound and well-defined principle; and that under the operation of this principle the assurance that no one need perish from want may be rendered complete, and the mendicant and the vagrant repressed by disarming them of their weapons—the plea of impending starvation. It was assumed, however, that in the administration of a compulsory system of relief, we were warranted in imposing such conditions on the individual relieved as are conducive to the benefit either of the individual himself or of the community at large, at whose expense he is to be relieved. One primary condition is, that his situation on the whole shall not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. Every penny bestowed that tends to render the condition of the pauper more eligible than that of an independent labourer is a bounty on indolence and vice. One further primary condition of a sound system of relief we considered was, that the relief given should be entire—not partial relief. Any partial relief, any relief in aid of wages, had, as respects the able-bodied, an inevitable tendency to substitute parish doles for wages, and to lower wages, and to destroy the independence of the labourer. We held that relief must be so given as to draw a clear and visible line between the paupers and the self-supporting classes. I found that the working classes, in the administration of their own funds, anxiously and laboriously applied this principle in the shape of a rule, that the recipients of relief should be either wholly on or wholly off the box, or the sick list. It is not absolutely necessary that, in the application of this principle, relief should be given, as commonly supposed, in the workhouse. The pauper may be on out-door work, and may receive out-door relief in return for work, provided that his whole time is occupied in working,

in return for this subsistence, under proper superintendence. They may be set on out-door work, as many of the able-bodied in Lancashire now are, strictly in compliance with the statute of Elizabeth, provided it be under proper superintendence and security that their whole time is occupied in working in return for relief.

*Principles of In-door Relief.*

The workhouse is the most convenient means of providing for fluctuating numbers of applicants, on occasions when they are too few, to make it worth while to provide out-door work or to employ officers to superintend it. The workhouse or poorhouse meets nearly all cases. The poorhouse serves, moreover, as an hospital, as a fever-ward, and an asylum in cases of sickness as well as of ordinary destitution.

*Condition of Populations without Compulsory Relief for Destitution.*

The state of things which prevails in the entire absence of any legal provision for the relief of the destitute is seen in Italy, in Naples, in Sicily, Spain, and other Roman Catholic countries, in voluntary relief by alms, and a sort of voluntary practice of out-door relief without any return of work. Whatever may be the merit in pious intention of relief by alms collected and distributed by ministers of religion, such an administration is always attended by this defect, that it is without means to ensure the funds from fraudulent misapplication, or secure a return of work from the able-bodied, or to enforce the conditions we specified as necessary thereto; in which our colleagues, the excellent late Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as the late Bishop of London, Blomfield, fully agreed with us. In the instances of the most abundant distribution of doles, the effects are seen in indolence, filth, squalid misery, vice, and discontent. The impression is created in the popular mind of the existence of an indefinite and inexhaustible fund apart from any sources in the labour of others, of wrong if there be any stint to them—of wrong for which, to the more active depredation, brigandage is a natural and proper means of redress, as a war to obtain a rightful share of wealth, and the means of subsistence without giving any work in return for it.

*Uses of a Poor Law System as an adjunct to a Police System.*

It is a one-sided and narrow view of a legal provision of the nature of the one in question to regard it as a measure simply for the relief of indigence. It has an important aspect, not commonly regarded, as a measure for the prevention of crime, as a measure of police, and of extended penal administration. In this view we contemplated that there should be a comity and concurrent action in England between the indigence relief service with a systematized

police service—when it could be obtained—for the suppression of juvenile mendicancy, delinquency, and vagrancy. In some of the improving provinces of Spain, where monasteries have been suppressed, and where brigandage has also been suppressed, it was found necessary, as I am informed, to precede these measures by provision for the relief of the able-bodied. In the districts infested by brigands, the course adopted was to require from each individual an account of his mode of livelihood, and to offer those who could show none subsistence at the public expense, but with the obligation of making a return of some work or service. Those of the indigent who refused to work or to accept the provision made for them were held to be living dishonestly, and treated accordingly. The indigence relief, as a police measure, has, I am told, proved to be effectual. When the late Count Cavour was Minister of Public Works, I had the honour of a special visit from him, to inquire as to the methods of dealing with the indigent classes in England. I directed his attention to the operations of the police upon the common beggars' lodging-houses in London, which he visited, as well as other institutions and model dwellings, and made himself acquainted with much of our Poor-law institutions. If he had been alive, I should have expected of him that he would have been prepared for the introduction of an extended Poor-law system on sound principles, as one of the measures for the improvement of the condition of the Italian population, that the conflict with the great plague of brigandage, as well as mendicancy, in which the Italian Government is now engaged, and that the measures of simple repression would have been preceded or accompanied by a well-organised system of legal relief, including a provision for the able-bodied, to be used as I am informed such a provision has been used in Spain.

#### *Introduction of a Poor Law System into Ireland.*

When our Government was pressed on the subject of a Poor-law for Ireland, I confidently advised the adoption of a provision for the relief of the able-bodied, which, by some statesmen, was deemed to be for Ireland a wild and dangerous provision, but my confidence in it was derived from observation of the working of analogous principles of relief upon able-bodied Irish labourers in England. Besides the deep-seated evil of mendicancy, such a provision might, I considered, be brought to bear on the evils connected with the occupancy of land and upon agrarian disturbances. Economically considered, whatsoever may be the importance of the freedom of change of the ownership of land obtained by means of the great measure—the Incumbered Estates Act—of which the late Sir Robert Peel said it was so good a measure that he really wondered how it had ever passed—of even greater importance is freedom of change of

the occupancy of the land, which should be facilitated and promoted in various ways, one of which is the assurance given to the cottier that he need not cling to the wretched mud hovel, for his children as well as himself, for that neither he nor they are now in any danger of perishing upon abandoning it, even if he fail to obtain a more productive occupancy. Under the Poor-law Amendment Act, extensive sales were made of cottages and plots of land, amounting, I believe, to a million or more in saleable value, which had fallen into the possession of the parishes, on account of the destitution of the cottier owners, but in a large proportion of cases, I believe, on their abandonment of them and the abandonment of the neighbourhoods for a higher return for labour to be obtained as wages elsewhere. The whole proceeding in this class of cases was one of benefit, in the greater return of produce to be obtained by their employment at the market rates of wages, as well as from the gain of produce to the country by superior or less expensive culture. Mr., now Sir George Nicholls, whose opinions were thought to be less extreme or more impartial than mine, was sent over to Ireland to examine and report on the measures of the nature of a legal provision which it was expedient to adopt. Upon a full and impartial examination, he reported decidedly in favour of a legal right being given to the able-bodied, and to a system of relief being instituted, in which entire and not partial relief should be given, and that relief in the workhouse should be the rule. By his exertions mainly, improved poorhouses have been constructed, and Ireland has had the advantage of an advanced system of relief, for which union chargeability in wide areas is substituted for the English law of relief under the law of parochial settlement.

#### *Of Out-door Relief System in Scotland.*

In relation to Scotland, we were not consulted, and an opposite system, founded apparently on the population theory, was adopted, under which the adult able-bodied persons, as such, have no right to relief whatsoever, and under which only one-fifth of the parishes are provided with poorhouses of any sort, and in which partial relief, or out-door relief, instead of being the rule, is the exception.

#### *Defects of Poor Law Administration in England.*

The opposite systems of relief have been in operation in Ireland and in England sufficiently long to enable a comparison to be made of the results which I now write; but, before I present the statistical results, I wish to submit some prefatory statements, chiefly bearing on the intermediate position occupied by the present Poor-law administration in England. Those only who have had experience of it can be aware how difficult it is, in the present state of political

information, to get any clear general principle appreciated, or to achieve its full practical application. In the present condition and practice of legislation, no measure based on administrative principles, partaking of science or system, goes into the House of Commons that, as a general rule, does not come out worse than it went in. The measure prepared by the Commission of Inquiry got through with less damage than most others of a systematic character, yet still it was largely and seriously altered; but nothing was taken from it that subsequent experience has not shown the necessity of having restored; and nothing was added that has not, in practice, proved to be obstructive. The supposed interests of the owners of close parishes proved to be too great for us, and we failed to obtain the repeal of the law of parochial settlement—that is, we failed to free the circulation of labour, and to improve the quality of the labour, and to improve production and wages to the extent which must have followed upon the measures proposed. We also failed to get the administration freed, as was intended, from action of those sinister interests which operate the most powerfully in narrow areas. Farmer guardians could still give, though indirectly, out-door relief, which in effect was frequently relief in aid of the wages of their own labourers. They as well as manufacturing guardians, as employers, could still apply relief in methods to effect their local stock of labour, and to keep down its price, cheating themselves, however, by impairing its quality and value. The owners of small tenements in towns could still, as guardians, give out-door partial relief, much of which was in payment of the high rents paid by their own tenants. Shopkeepers, as guardians in towns, might still give, as they often determinedly exercised their discretion in giving out-door and partial relief, wholly in money instead of in kind, much of which money was expended in their own shops, or in the shops of their class. Mal-administration of these descriptions was checked, but not extirpated, as it might have been, and, on the whole, scope was given for the operation of an aggregation of interests which made partial and out-door relief the rule, at the expense of the ratepayer, and really of the lower classes, instead of the exception. The administrative areas for much of the business were consolidated from fifteen thousand parishes to some six hundred unions. In rural and thinly populated districts these areas were commonly sufficient; but in urban districts, what may be called natural and proper administrative areas, comprising a whole city or town, or the connected aggregation of houses with their suburbs, were cut up at the expense of efficiency and economy. Thus the city of Manchester is really cut up into four independent districts (suburban) and administrations for relief, each acting without any necessary concert with the others, or any common principle with the others, each being too small to effect, at a moderate expense, those

executive arrangements of paid officers and means of providing and superintending work for meeting promptly, extraordinary as well as ordinary, destitution, which might be gained at a reduced expense, if they were made, as they ought to be, on the scale of the whole city, including its suburbs. I do not mean to say that such extraordinary destitution as has occurred in the cotton districts may be met without extraneous administrative or other aid; but our report under the Commission of Inquiry pointed out town drainage works and other such rude works for the employment of the adult able-bodied, as is now being resorted to with success: and I do mean to say, and experienced paid executive officers would agree with me, that on the due application of the principles therein laid down, such work might have been in full operation more than a year ago throughout all the districts, and that a large amount of demoralisation amongst the labourers might have been saved, and a great deal of severe pressure upon the smaller ratepayers averted, and far less extraneous charitable assistance needed to get over the crisis. I always contemplated that responsibility for the initiation as well as the execution of executive measures should mainly attach to those on whom only it can be charged—namely, the permanent paid officers, locally appointed and supervised; and not on changing, unpaid, and comparatively ill-informed officers, as respects whom any real responsibility for any ill they may do, even in the promotion of their sinister interests, is delusive. The system of entire or in-door relief, as laid down, impedes the action of such sinister interests as have been extensively prevalent during the late crisis in preventing immediate reductions of the masses or congestions of the unemployed, by emigration or by migration, or by changes of employment; it would also have prevented much abusive relief by the payment of rates in aid of labour which has been resorted to by employers who act as guardians, or by guardians who have acted in their supposed, but mistaken, class interests at the expense of other classes of ratepayers, shopkeepers, and others who derive no immediate benefit, if any, from the protected trade. It would take much time to describe the waste, the suffering, the demoralisation, and the permanent burdens which have been imposed on the ratepayers, which the combination of means and consolidated local administrative machinery originally contemplated would have prevented. In many urban districts, as in the metropolis, the profitable labour is given, in some wealthy sub-districts, without any contribution towards the relief of the casualties of destitution contingent on that labour, whilst the entire chargeability for them is thrown upon other and poor sub-districts, or places which the labourers inhabit, and which derive the least benefit from their industry. On the occasion of epidemic visitations, the hospital accommodation in the poorest part of a large town is overcharged,

and the officers overworked, and extra assistance needed, whilst the sick wards of another part of the town will have abundance of room, and a service of officers little occupied. In respect to medical relief, it may be observed that it is contrary to sound principle, and most injurious in its operation, that the public service should be mixed up with private practice, which necessarily withdraws the interest of the officer from his duty towards the destitute. It would be far more economical, instead of two men's half-time, half in public practice and half in private, to have one man's whole time, and that time directed to the work of mitigation as well as of cure.

*Classification of Pauper Children and others in separate Establishments originally Proposed.*

Our proposal in respect to existing pauperism and establishments was to have classified, by the appropriation of separate houses, each to one class of objects, as would have been extensively practicable in populous urban districts, with the existing tenements, assigning one house to the males, another to the females, one for the sick, and most especially one for orphan and destitute children, instead of putting all classes under one roof. The moral evils which have been inflicted on children—female children more particularly—from bringing them up in the same house with dissolute adults, from the influence of whose example, under the existing conditions of the single union houses, it has been found impracticable to protect them. These evils, so created, are the subject of the regular remonstrances of Miss Twining and the Ladies' Workhouse Visiting Committee, and are maintained in despite of the continued representations of school inspectors, and of the proof of the superior working of the half school time system and industrial training in the separate houses and district schools. It followed, on the principle of classification in separate houses laid down, that lunatics and idiots, the blind, the deaf, and the dumb, who are still scattered about solitarily amidst other classes, to their mutual annoyance and misery, should have been gathered together, and placed in distinct establishments, where they might receive their befitting treatment.

The improvement, which has been effected in Ireland as well as in England, stops short of one great result contemplated and practicable, with the aid of a well-directed compulsory system of relief—namely, the suppression of habitual beggary, and the entire clearance of those seed-plots of juvenile delinquency and adult crime. To effect this, to put a stop to hereditary pauperism, to cut off the vicious succession of those who live habitually as mendicants or depredators, society must be brought to appreciate and to act upon the profound old Hebrew maxim—that he who neglects to teach his son a trade brings him up as a thief.

*Concurrent Action of Police originally Intended.*

But, to effect this object, the concurrent service of a general and an organised police is needed, and this did not exist in England, nor does it now. On my representation, a commission was appointed to examine into the principles of the organisation of a general police force, and on its preventive as well as repressive action. We found that the estimated number of some hundred thousand persons living by depredation as well as by mendicancy, from whom the population of the prisons as well as of reformatories is kept up, was chiefly migratory, and that migration, from one end of the kingdom to the other, required the corresponding extent of action of a police force. For the protection of London or an inland town, it might be requisite to direct measures to be taken at Liverpool, or Holyhead, or Bristol, or for Edinburgh at Portpatrick, and that, too, with the aid of poor-houses, with their vagrant wards along the whole line. Isolated forces, for the most part, only divert the predatory lines upon each other. But what can be said to the state of intelligence which permits the population of one part of the metropolis itself, the city, to be charged with an extra expense for an inferior protection, and to be subjected to an extra amount of depredation at the expense and inconvenience of the rest of the metropolis, by impeding inter-communication and pursuit of depredators, who prey upon one district whilst they live and take refuge in another. Ireland, however, has an excellently organised general police, which may now be brought to bear, by concurrent action, with that of the Poor-law service, for the attainment of the great object. The provision of a Poor-law for Ireland was opposed by Mr. O'Connell; and, as a compromise, the intended provisions against mendicancy were given up to him: but, in 1847, mendicancy was for the first time made criminal in Ireland, and it is to be hoped that active steps for its repression, with the alternative of the workhouse, will not be longer delayed. Mendicancy has, nevertheless, been largely reduced by the indirect operation of the law. But by a due exercise of the police force, which, in deference to the feelings—the prejudices if I may so call them—not of the working clergy, but of the Roman Catholic clergy, has been kept back, it may at any time be applied to its complete extirpation.

*Superior Economy of Paid and Responsible Administration.*

With all the shortcomings which I have described as relates to the present English Poor-law, the imperfect organisation and partial consolidation has arrested large growing evils, and has given very general satisfaction to those whose knowledge of what was really practicable is limited. By the new Poor-law organisation of paid permanent officers, paid clerks, paid relieving officers, paid masters

and matrons of workhouses, paid district medical officers, paid school-masters, and, it may be added, of paid assistant-commissioners and inspectors, with the paid officers of a Central Board, together with a large expenditure upon new buildings throughout the country, all of which were the outcry as extravagancies; a large saving has, nevertheless, been effected upon the unpaid services, chiefly of one parish officer throughout the country—the unpaid parish overseer. I cite the statistics of Mr. Purdy, who shows that, in the 22 years preceding the reform of the Poor-law in England, 143 millions was the sum spent for relief, but in the 22 subsequent years it was only 129 millions, notwithstanding that the population averaged nearly 25 per cent. more in the latter than in the former period. This is equal to a total decrease of 33 millions, or yearly more than 21 per cent. on the service of parish officers, but the reduction is really much greater, as formerly there was very large expenditure in labour rates and otherwise, which did not enter into the parochial accounts. By a higher administrative organisation, and executive expenditure and complete action, on the principles originally purposed, the saving might be nearly doubled, apart from the difference of results. I have lately shown, for example, in respect to education that by a higher organisation for education, with a head master at double the ordinary salary, aided by a second and a third assistant master, with a staff of paid pupil teachers, with a drill master for physical training, as originally contemplated and realized on the half-time and industrial training in the district pauper schools, the cost is reduced to one pound per head per annum, and the work done in a superior manner, in half the time of the single competent master, at a charge of two pounds per head, and with vast differences in the comparative industrial aptitudes imparted, and in the moral and economic results achieved. The public economy would be considerably augmented in the directions I have indicated by the concurrent action of a general police. It has been proved, as respects the partial organisations of isolated county forces which followed our recommendations of a general force in England, that the services of paid privates, paid sergeants, paid superintendents, and paid county high-constables, under disadvantageous conditions for economy of the exclusion of the burghs, were brought immediately within the total expenses attendant on the services of the one officer—the unpaid parish-constable. In fact, we were prepared to ensure the services of an organised general police force of some twenty-two thousand men, for the whole of Great Britain, it might be said for nothing, or within the whole of the direct and collateral existing expenses attendant on the services of the parish constables, paid beadles, and isolated borough constables.

*Greater Expense of the Scotch System of Out-door Relief, without Poorhouses,*

The new Poor-law organisation in Ireland, I have no doubt, is, in fact, a large economy upon no previous organisation of the kind whatsoever. In respect to the provision for Scotland, I am apprehensive that, from the error of its principle, the change has been one of increased and seriously increasing charge. As showing the result of two different principles of administration, the experience of Ireland and Scotland present the best means of comparison, as having had no large growth of hereditary pauperism, as distinct from common mendicancy, generated under the long mal-administration of legal provisions for relief as in England. Scotland, then, with its three millions of population, had, in 1860, 120,000 paupers, or 4 per cent. on the population, an amount nearly equal to the accumulated pauperism of England, which was 4·7 per cent. Ireland, with upwards of six millions of population, had 95,000 paupers, or only 1·5 per cent. on the population. In Ireland the cost of the relief given was 2s. 2½d. per head on the population. In Scotland it was 4s. 2d., or approaching that of England, which was 5s. 7½d. per head on the population. The average cost of relief per case relieved was greater in Ireland, the relief being there more full, it being 9l. 18s. 6d. per case, whilst even in England it was less than 7l., and in Scotland it was only 5l. England, which ranks highest in wealth, is the deepest in pauperism; under the system of partial relief, six-sevenths of the relief is out-door relief; Ireland which is the lowest in wealth, and which gives entire relief, or relief in the workhouse, in twenty-nine cases out of thirty, is the least burdened with paupers; whilst Scotland, which stands between England and Ireland in respect to wealth, where nineteen-twentieths of the cases are relieved out of doors, is approaching to England in respect to pauperism. The influence of the erroneous system on the population appears to be such as we should have anticipated. Mr. Briscoe, General Superintendent under the Board of Supervision for Scotland, having given evidence of the demoralising effect of out-door relief in the population of the Highlands, was asked, as a concluding question, “Then the effect of “ this out-door relief has been very demoralising, and has broken down “ the spirit of independence ?” and he answers, “ Not the least doubt “ about it; it has deteriorated to a considerable extent, truth, industry, “ morality, self-respect, self-reliance, the natural affections and inde- “ pendence of character; it appears as if the whole of the humbler “ classes had completely changed character; there is no shame what- “ ever in demanding relief even among some of higher station. The “ state of things in the Highlands of Scotland is perfectly deplorable, “ and every person admits it.”

*Advantages of In-door Relief as Displayed in Ireland.*

Persons whose knowledge of the real condition of the classes who come within the range of a compulsory provision is not much better than that obtainable from seeing opera shepherds and shepherdesses, or the sketches of artists, treat out-door relief as a measure of severity; but those who have examined the foetid one-roomed tenement in which the members of a whole family, often more, are heaped together—in which children are born, and the sick are kept amidst the healthy—in which all die, and where the dead are retained amidst the living until the means of interment are found, know that every case of removal is an act of humanity, and sanitary relief to those who remain, as well as to those who are taken away. To the Irish cottier who may be persuaded to give up the wretched mud hovel, in which the pig has had its sty and its measles, with his children, in-door relief gives him a clean, well-ventilated lodging, a clean bed, and a dietary and condition of existence such as he never before had in his life, and gives him this freely for a moderate return of labour, until he can emigrate, or get labour in the open labour market. The existence of such a refuge relieves him from despair, and gives him courage to adventure far afield for the improved means of independent self-support. That it is resorted to as a refuge is shown by the fact that in-door relief is attended by a greater degree of fluctuation and change in ordinary times than out-door relief. Once on the out-door pauper roll no one voluntarily resigns his position, and consequently the permanent pension-list, by far the heaviest incumbrance on the English and Scotch poor-rates, undergoes comparatively little change in the course of the year. In Ireland, on the contrary, as the Commissioners state, the changes are continual, through discharges occurring voluntarily on the part of the paupers, and through admissions freely granted to the applicant for relief. Thus, the average duration of the cases little exceeds three months. The general workhouse provision enabled Ireland to weather through the horrors of the famine, which would without them have been enormously aggravated; and there can be no doubt that it has been one great aid to the improvement of the population now going on in Ireland.

*Preventives of Pauperism, Sanitary and Educational, not intended.*

After all, however, and at the best, the service for relief, like the police service of repression, is a melancholy service. It is a dreary prospect, if we view it as an inevitably perpetual condition. I have always, as my opportunities permitted, looked forward to the development and promotion of the means of prevention. The common cause of legislation at present for the relief of the destitute is like foundling hospitals, and making provision for the treatment of marsh diseases

—most necessary and humane so long as, from ignorance of sanitary science, the diseases were inevitable; but this is like going on without any conception or capacity to receive, or to act upon ideas, that the marshes admit of being drained, and being made, in place of fever nests, fields of healthful and inferior production. Of the existing causes of destitution and pauperism to which the class of independent labourers are subject, a larger proportion are those which do arise from localising causes, bad sanitary conditions, ill-drained, and cesspool-tainted, and over-crowded habitations; over-crowded, ill-ventilated schools, and unduly prolonged hours of sedentary constraint, without due physical exercise for the young; over-crowded and ill-ventilated places of work, and over-long hours in them for the adults; with the results—excessive sickness and mortality, and premature disability for work, premature chargeability on some fund, public or private, which fund the shortness of the workman's career commonly prevents him from providing for himself. These causes of disability and pauperism are everywhere gross and patent. It may be said, in the words of the Psalmist, that the earth is “filled “with the habitations of cruelty.” By partial sanitary appliances, these causes of misery and destitution have, in various instances, been reduced one third, and, it is proved, may be reduced one-half; and that the period of self-support and working ability of the labourer or the artisan may be extended, as I have estimated, ten years or more, so as to enable him to make those reserves, to ensure the ease and independence and respectable self-support which is the last mundane consolation of old age. The landowners in Scotland, who are apprehensive of the increasing pressure of pauperism, and especially the owners of the single-roomed tenements, in which a million of the population of Scotland reside, will best ward off future burthens by exertions in this direction; and next to it, in this other, in arresting juvenile mendicity and vagrancy, and in cutting off the vicious succession to pauperism and vice, by imparting to the young industrial aptitudes, by means of early physical, as well as intellectual, moral and religious training. The efficiency of this great means of prevention has been demonstrated. I may assume that I have elsewhere proved that on the half school-time system, the common elementary instruction may be imparted in half the hours of the day now occupied, in half the period of years now occupied to the detriment of productive occupation, and at half the expense that is now incurred for inferior mental instruction, divested of the physical training, which is so necessary to impart industrial aptitudes. If these great means of prevention, educational, and sanitary be duly prosecuted, pauperism must eventually be of comparatively unfrequent occurrence, and a charge of little public account.

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